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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 002310

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: ITALY OPEN TO MULTILATERAL CONFERENCE ON
TRANSNISTRIA

REF: STATE 125824

Classified By: Labor Counselor Candace Putnam, for reasons 1.4 (B)(D).

(C) Labor Counselor delivered reftel points July 8 to Marco Marsilli, MFA Director for Caucuses and Central Asia. Marsilli said that Italy shares U.S. concern about the lack of progress in resolving the Transnistria conflict and agrees that the five-part talks have shown few results. He agreed that U.S. and EU participation could provide the necessary stimulus to move the process forward. Marsilli also said the Italians were studying the Ukrainian proposal, which needs to be fine-tuned but is a good basis for improving the situation. The Moldovans, he believed, were not against the Ukrainian plan in principle but seek guarantees that elections can lead to the end of conflict, but not the start of independence. The Russians, continued Marsilli, remain problematic. The Russians almost convinced the Moldovan president to accept their 2003 plan and remain unhappy with the prospect of losing their sphere of influence in Transnistria. Marsilli said he hoped that Italy would support U.S. involvement in the process and was open to the prospect of a multilateral conference.

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